

An ACT for the more effectual Trial and Punishment of criminal Slaves,
and to authorize His Majesty's Justices of the Peace to appoint Constables
in cases of emergency. [24 October 1789.]

Preamble.

WHEREAS the laws at present in force in these Islands, have been found defective, in many respects, in regard to the trial and punishment of criminal slaves: For remedy whereof, we, Your Majesty's most loyal and obedient subjects, his excellency the captain general, the honourable the members of Your Majesty's council, and the general assembly of the Island of Grenada, and such of the Grenadines as are thereon dependant, pray Your most excellent Majesty that it may be enacted and ordained, and be it, and it is enacted and ordained by the authority aforesaid, That upon complaint made to any of His Majesty's justices of the peace, within these Islands, of any heinous and grievous crime or felonious act or acts committed or done by any slave or slaves, the said justice shall issue his warrant for apprehending the offender or offenders, and shall summon all persons or slaves that can give evidence therein to appear before him; and if upon examination it appeareth probable that

Clause I.

On complaint made to any magistrate of any heinous crime committed by a slave, justice to issue his warrant for apprehending the offender, and to sum-

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the apprehended is or are guilty, he shall forthwith commit him her or them to prison; and within ten days after such commitment, shall associate with him one other justice of the peace; and when so associated, they are hereby required and empowered immediately to issue their warrant or precept, directed to some constable resident in the parish where the said crime is committed, to summon three freeholders, or other reputable inhabitants, qualified to serve as jurors, to join them the said justices, at such time and place as they shall appoint, not exceeding four days from and after the date of the said warrant, to whom the said justice shall administer the following oath: "You shall, to the best of your knowledge and judgment, impartially try the prisoner or prisoners before you, and judgment give according to evidence." And these five persons when together met, shall constitute, and are hereby declared to be a court, with full power and authority to try the said offender or offenders, and to cause him her or them, with all evidences, to come before them, and to admit in all cases the evidence of one slave against another; and if the said justices and freeholders shall give sentence of death, or such other punishment as the laws of this colony doth, shall, or may, direct; and forthwith, by their warrants, cause immediate execution, in capital cases, to be done by such slave or slaves as the provost-marshal, or his lawful deputy shall appoint; and in other cases, by such slave or slaves as the clerk of the nearest market shall appoint, in such manner as such justices shall think fit.

to admit the evidence of one slave against another; and forthwith cause immediate execution, in capital cases, to be done by the marshal, and in other cases by the clerk of the market.

mon all persons that can give evidence. And if, on examination, probability of guilt appears, to commit offender to prison; within ten days to associate with him one or more justice, and so associated, to issue their warrant to a constable to summon three freeholders to join said justices at such time and place as they shall appoint; not exceeding four days.

Oath of jurors. These five persons constitute a court, with full power to try the offender, and call evidences before them, and in capital cases, to be done

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid; That if any freeholder or other inhabitant, after being summoned as aforesaid, shall refuse or neglect to attend at the time and place appointed in the justice's warrant or precept, he shall forfeit the sum of fifty pounds current money, to be recovered by action of debt, bill, plaint, or information, in any court of record in these Islands, and applied to the public uses thereof.

Clause II. Jurors summoned, and not attending, to forfeit 50 l.

And whereas it must tend greatly to the public peace and tranquillity that the executive part of the law be rendered more prompt and summary, in cases where the offences are not of a felonious nature, and triable before the justices and freeholders, as herein before mentioned; BE it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any slave or slaves shall personally insult, abuse, threaten, or in any manner contemptuously treat any white or free person, or shall harbour, receive, or conceal any slave or slaves, knowing that such slave or slaves shall have run away, or absented his her or themselves, from his her or their master, renter, or employer's service; or if any slave or slaves shall be found gaming, beating drums, blowing shells, or other loud instruments, at improper hours, or fighting, or shall draw a knife upon his opponent, or shall be guilty of any crime, which by the laws of England would be deemed larceny, such slave or slaves shall be punishable for any such offence, at the discretion of any one justice of the peace, who is hereby authorized and empowered to take cognizance of the same, and to inflict such punishment, not to extend to life or limb, as he shall judge adequate to the offence.

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Clause III. Any slave who shall personally insult, abuse or threaten any white or free coloured person, or conceal any slave, knowing the same to be run away, or found gaming, beating drums, &c. at improper hours, or fighting, or shall be guilty of any crime deemed larceny by the laws of England, such slave shall be punished at the justice's discretion, such punishment not to extend to life or limb.

shall be punished at the justice's discretion, such punishment not to extend to life or limb.

And whereas persons appointed by the justices in their sessions to execute the office of constable, sometimes change the place of their residence, and the justices find it difficult to get warrants issued by them, executed; for remedy whereof, BE it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful for any two of his Majesty's justices of the peace, and they are hereby authorized in all cases of emergency to nominate and appoint one or more person or persons to execute the office of constable; and if the person or persons so appointed, shall refuse or neglect to execute the duties of the said office, he or they shall be liable to be prosecuted, and punished in the same manner as persons appointed constables by the justices in their sessions, and who refuse to execute the said office.

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Clause IV. Any two justices, in cases of emergency, to appoint constables. Persons appointed, refusing to serve, liable to punishment, as if appointed at the sessions.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That this Act shall be and continue in force for two years, from the day of the publication thereof, and from thence till the end of the next session of the Legislature, or until some further or other provisions are made for carrying into execution the purposes of this Act.

Clause V. Act to continue in force two years.

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